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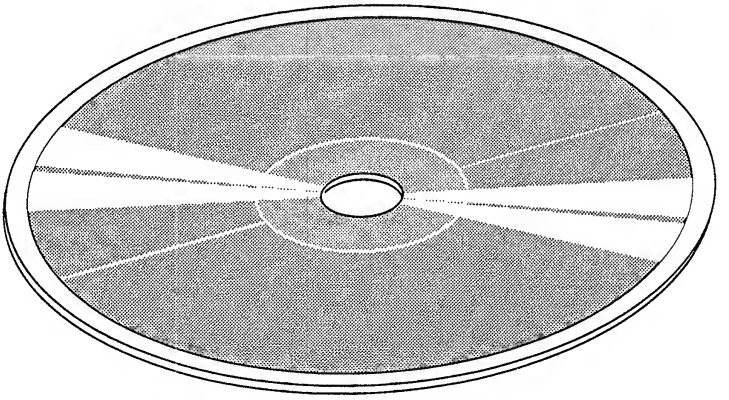

Stuck in the Warehouse?

Newsnotes

November 1990 • Vol. 1, No. 11 $ 1.00 / $ 2.50 with Disk

The Editor's Corner

CD-ROM?

The great white hope of the ST community, the CD-ROM player, has finally made it to US shores. Unfortunately, it is currently sitting in a warehouse, awaiting software to take advantage of the benefits it offers. And there are rumors that the CD-ROM player may never be released here in the United States. This situation, in many ways, is symbolic of Atari's current status—great potential that is currently lying untapped.

There are a lot of great things on the horizon from Atari, but they have lingered long there, just out of reach of us users. We sang the slogan that 89' was the year of Atari, and a few diehard users have even tried to sing the same tune this year. If owning an Atari computer is good for anything, it is good for developing a sense of patience.

Now, with the sudden resignation of Atari US's new president, Elie Kenan, it looks as if things are as bad as they ever have been for Atari enthusiasts. Morale within Atari Corp. is said to be at an all-time low, as is Atari stock. Hopes are dimming that Atari will ever claim any respectable share of the US market, or that current owners will get the support they deserve. There is always hope, but things look bleak that Atari will pull off any miracles this year.

What will Atari offer faithful users in 1991? I don't know, but I do know that there is no point in wondering or worrying about it at this time. It may be fatalistic, but "what will be will be", and I refuse to moan and gripe about rumors. While waiting, I will happiliy continue to compute away on my ST.

In This Issue:

N.O.A.H. News	3
Publishing Pointers	5
Chaos Strikes Back	7
I Was a Beta-Tester...	9
The Electronic Slate	11
Hero's Quest I	12
Rumor Mill	13
Puzzle Break	15
Public Library Computer	16
N.O.A.H. Application	17
Calendar of Events	18

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THIS MONTH'S COVER DISK:

This month's cover disk contains numerous Public Domain games and utilities that are truly enjoyable. I'm sure that one of your favorites has been included in this collection. Enjoy...

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NOAH NEWS

Another month has passed and all the good news comes from user groups and Europe with only unexplained toungue tripping coming from Sunnyvale in the form of Atari U.S. At the show in Germany, it is estimated that over 55,000 people attended! Sounds more like a city than a show.

This user group is doing fairly well though certain moves, or non-moves, by Atari are beginning to take their toll on the disgust thresholds of all formerly loyal Atari supporters. N.O.A.H. is continuing to grow in membership and the associated BBS , NERD, is up over the 100 member mark and adding new members at an average of 15-20 a week. I hope that if nothing else, the members stay together to exchange any and all news in the entire computer field.

Due to growing business commitments on the part of both Kevin Steele and myself, John and Brenda Giguere will be taking over the organizational portion of the N.O.A.H. User Group. I know they will be looking for some assistance in various areas so please contact them and offer your congratulations and support. Since the Newsletter has been Kevin's and my 'baby' since inception, we are going to continue to produce what we feel, and others have aggreed, is one of the best newsletters in the Atari community. Remember, this newsletter truly is 'nothing' without all the great contributing writers we have every month so keep up the great work.

I know the 'disk-o-da-month' has been late the last two months and hopefully the situation has been handled. My apologies go out to all who usually get this disk. Be prepared, there will be three, yes THREE, to pick up this month.

Enough for now. Oops, because of Thanksgiving, November's meeting will be pushed to the following week. Check in on the BBS to keep up on the news.

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Publishing Pointers

Desktop Publishing as a Business

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At the user group meetings where I have demo'ed desktop publishing, I have been asked how I got into the business, how much should you charge, what do you need to get started, and so on. In fact, I've gotten calls from bulletin board users asking the same questions.

Before I get into the mechanics of working for yourself, let me point out that I actually don't do a whole lot of desktop publishing in my business. I write for a living, and occasionally use desktop publishing in that endeavor to spruce up a document or add some necessary diagrams to a manual. To be perfectly honest, I don't know how viable desktop publishing is as a stand-alone career. Why? Well, let's take a look at what is required to start up a desktop publishing business.

Getting Started

The first obvious thing you'll need to start desktop publishing is a computer. If you are planning on doing complex designs, you might want to consider more than one meg of memory, especially since the next generation of programs (such as PageStream 2.0) will barely work in just one meg of memory.

Next, if you are really serious about desktop publising, you will need a professional output device. If you can afford it, a postscript printer is the best way to go. However, the cheapest postscript printer goes for around $2000, so it may be out of your price range. HP's Deskjet printers are cheap and popular, but are slow and the ink smears easily.

Software is also necessary for desktop publishing. You should find a program you are comfortable with, and one that has the prospect of being supported in the future with upgrades. Make sure that you can print postscript to disk—that way, you can take advantage of the many high-resolution output printing services offered by print shops when a project requires the best output possible.

Finally, there is one last thing you will need to get started, and it has nothing to do with hardware or software. That is the expertise necessary to produce good-looking documents. They don't call them "Professionals" for nothing, as there are a lot of things you need to know about publishing before you can create top-notch creations. If you're not an expert, you should have the desire to become one before you "go pro". You'll need to be able to "speak the language" of printers and publishers, and understand the printing process.

How Much To Charge?

This question is a bit harder to give a straight answer to. There are no set rates for desktop publishing, and surveys have shown the hourly rates charged range from about $30/hour to $90/hour, depending on the type of work and the final product.

A good way to calculate your hourly rate is to try and find out how much it would cost a company to hire a person full-time to do the same work, then divide that amount by 2000 (50 40-hour weeks), and then add 50% to that amount (for expenses, health care, etc.). The final result is a good starting point for an hourly rate. For projects such as resumes, menus, flyers, and such, just figure out how long it typically takes you to complete one, then apply your hourly rate. Always compare your rates to the competiton, if possible.

How Do I Get Clients?

This is one area where you're going to have to put in some hard work to see results. If you're planning on offering DTP services for small companies (for menus at resturants, perhaps), you're going to probably have to do some door-knocking. Another option is to create a flyer describing your services, and mail it to prospective clients. If you want to offer resume services, a poster placed on a college bulletin board should prove effective.

Don't expect to be swamped with offers at first—it takes time to build up a good solid customer base. Most experts warn that you should have a six-month reserve of cash handy when starting a business. If that sounds frightening to you, then you might want to start your new business as a moonlighting operation, keeping your present job while you get your new desktop publishing business going.

What About Taxes?

If you're going to work for yourself, you're going to have to take care of your own taxes. This is much more than just filing an annual 1040 form, it involves paying quarterly estimated taxes, including your own social security. Normally, the company you work for pays half of your social security taxes. When you work for yourself, you pay it all, meaning your taxes will go up if you work for yourself.

Luckily, there are some advantages to working for yourself. Practically all business expenses are deductible, and you can deduct a percentage of your rent or mortgage based on the square-footage used for your home-based business. If you are willing to spend some time researching tax laws at the library, you can keep your tax bills under control.

In Summary

There is a lot involved in starting up a desktop publishing business, and like I said earlier, it may not be a good choice for a business. There just aren't enough menus and resumes out there to make a good, steady income. Of course, I could be wrong—with enough hard work, talent, and luck, desktop publishing could prove to be a rewarding career. One way to maximize your chances of success is to make sure you have other services to offer, a fall-back in case things don't pan out. More than half of all small businesses don't make it past their second year, so the odds aren't always in your favor.

This may seem like a rather pessimistic viewpoint, and I'm not sure it was a very encouraging article. It is, however, a realistic perspective, and if you go into business prepared for the worst, your chances of surviving problems when they happen are much better. As always, good fortune smiles on the lucky—and the prepared.

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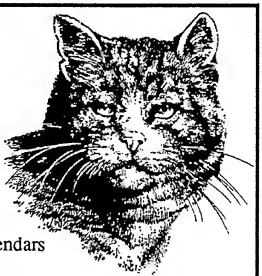

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Chaos Strikes Back

by FTL

Review by Hy-Liss, the Green Dragon.
(a.k.a. John Giguere)

Sometime ago the world of Atari adventure games was blessed by the creation of Dungeon Master. For those of you who have played the game, bear with me while I give a quick recap for the benefit of those who haven't. Your mission in Dungeon Master was to guide four hand-picked adventurers through the twelve levels of the dungeon in order to find the firestaff and use it to return order to the world. A host of horrible beasties were trying to stop you. And at the very bottom of the dungeon was a close personal friend of mine—Rover the Dragon. Those of you who fought Rover know just how tough he was. Assuming you defeated Rover, and only half of you who claimed to managed it, you then went on to claim the power gem and used it and the firestaff to conquer Lord Chaos.

Feeling pretty smug, huh? Well guess what turkeys, you weren't fast enough. Did you ever wonder why Lord Chaos let you wander around his dungeon without harassing you? Well, in this sequel to Dungeon Master you find out why. While you were wasting time bashing mummies and slashing rock creatures old Lord Chaos was plotting his return. He had constructed a new dungeon, and in it he placed the four magical corbums. These magical devices would collect mana from the world until they were powerful enough to split the Gray Lord into his component parts.

This adventure starts, if you read the intro, as you are summoned to the Gray Lord's castle. When you arrive there you find the Gray Lord himself deathly ill. The cause of his illness is explained to you and you are sent on a mission to destroy the corbums.

On the technical side, this game plays exactly as the original Dungeon Master did. You have four characters which have abilities based on levels in four different character classes. For the uninitiated among you these classes are: fighter, ninja, wizard and priest. As you gain levels your ability scores including hit points, mana points, stamina, etc.—all will increase as well. As small warning here, if you choose to take low level characters into the world of Chaos Strikes Back (CSB) they won't live long. Once again there is a prison level holding twenty-four characters in mirrors of life trapping. You'll only see twenty-two, the other two are hidden, and no I'm not going to tell you where to find them, that wouldn't be sporting. After picking your characters or using your party from Dungeon Master you must create a new adventure. To do this you use the utility disk provided. The utility disk has four selections on the main menu.

The first menu choice has a little graphic story that shows old dark and ugly (Lord Chaos) hard at work creating his mew dungeon. Presumably he was doing this while you were wandering around in Dungeon Master. And you didn't think you had to hurry. Along with the graphic pictures there is text that explains a short preamble to the adventure you are about to enter. This is well worth watching once, but losing something after that.

The second menu choice is edit characters/create new adventure. This is the important one. This menu item allows you to do two things, first it will allow you to modify the picture of your adventurer—that's the little square image that appears whenever you do an inventory. The way to modify the picture is simple and completely explained in the manual [tough luck to the pirates out there]. Once you have finished modifying the party or if you choose not to modify the party you are then faced with three selections—either save the portraits and in this way build up your own Rouges Gallery, forget the whole thing, or create new adventure. The last

menu selection is vital. Up until now whether you drew the characters from Dungeon Master or from the prison cell you have been dealing with a Dungeon Master saved game. The purpose of create new adventure is to create the Chaos Strikes Back saved game. Without this menu selection you can't play the game, it's that simple.

The next choice on the utility disk is the hint oracle. Those of you who spent hours pulling out your hair on level nine of Dungeon Master (level 10 for those of your who counted the hall of mirrors as level 1) looking for the false wall now have someone to bail you out. There's a catch, her information usually is very clear. However, she has been known to lie, consider death row. But then I'm getting ahead of myself again. Simply save the game where you are having the problem, quit, insert the utility disk, select hint oracle and follow the directions from there.

The final choice will be very handy for those of you who talk to the hint oracle a lot. Simply stated it is a software cold boot. Pull out the utility disk, put in the Chaos game disk, select this option and Chaos will automatically boot.

Now lets talk about the game itself. I don't think I'd be revealing to much to tell you that you start out stark naked and in a world of hurt. When you appear in the new dungeon you do so between two very hungry improved purple worms. It takes an average of three six level fireballs to kill these critters. For those of you who have never played Dungeon Master, in order to cast spells you must be able to select the proper sets of symbols from twenty-four selections. The spell symbols are grouped insets of six. There are four sets of six. You select one symbol from each of the four sets (in some cases only three). The actual mechanics of it is to difficult to explain in a short article, suffice it to say don't play Chaos until you have learned how to play Dungeon Master. Chaos will not give you the chance to learn how to cast spells. The monsters in Chaos are generally tougher than the equivalent monster in Dungeon Master with the exception of the dragons. I think they found every whimp dragon in the world and stuck him in here. But then, Lord Chaos isn't all that tough either, and only puts in a short appearance in this game. Gee, I almost forgot to tell you what your mission is—simple, find the four corbums and throw them into the ful-ya pit. By the way, you have to find the pit too. Once again, the graphics are gorgeous, the digitized sound is excellent, and the groans and grunts as you are getting beat to death are very realistic. Suffice it to say if you like Dungeon Master, you'll probably like Chaos.

Oh yeah, one more thing. Due to the fact that I like human beings (they're crunchy), I'll let you in on a little secret, in a couple of the back issues of ST Action they explained how to activate the cheat mode. In the cheat mode you get the firestaff and invulnerability. But if you want to find out how it works, you gotta find that particular back issue of ST Action. Good luck and watch out because the dragon stalking you through the dungeon might be me, and I don't take prisoners.

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I Was A Beta-Tester For The FBI: A Semi-True Story

by Kevin Steele

Okay, let's set things straight. I was NOT a beta-tester for the FBI. I don't know if they even have beta-testers. It just sounded like a good title. I was, however, a beta-tester for Branch Always software. I was in on the beta-testing for Quick ST II, one of two screen accelerators available for the Atari ST.

So, you may ask, what is beta-testing and why would anyone want to do it? Beta-testing is when a software developer sends out preliminary versions of their new software to a select group of users, who then proceed to pound on the software as hard as they can to try and get it to crash. Inevitably, they will succeed, perhaps without even trying too hard.

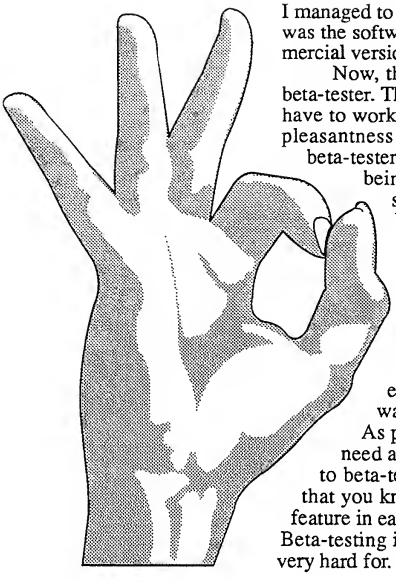
When the beta-tester manages to crash the software, they try to carefully note what they were doing when the software crashed, and then try to re-create the sequence of events that led to the crash. This is important, as it allows the developer to try and narrow down just exactly what is wrong with the software. If a certain feature of the software isn't performing as it should, the beta-tester notes it. After a pre-set length of time (usually 5-7 days), the beta-tester should have compiled a (sometimes lengthy) list of what is wrong with the software. The developer tries to fix all the problems on these lists, and then sends out the next version to the beta-testers. The cycle repeats until the software seems solid enough to release to the public at large.

My beta-testing experience began shortly after I sent in a shareware payment for an earlier version of Quick ST. I was contacted by the author, Darek Michoka, through GEnie when he sent me an early copy of what was to become Quick ST II. As I had a Mega ST with TOS 1.4 and a multi-sync monitor, I was able to test the software in a variety of conditions, including both color and monochrome. I loaded Quick ST II, then proceeded to load in WordPerfect, LDW Power, PageStream, Degas Elite, Easy Draw, and any other program I had in my arsenal. Strange things started happening. PageStream was the worst victim, as I could no longer import IMG graphics, and there were all sorts of strange characters popping up on the display. The white fill pattern in Easy Draw suddenly was full of little fuji characters. Hotwire didn't redraw properly. Neither did Degas Elite.

Other strange things happened, including a few spectacular crashes. I tried my best to track down the specific cause of these crashes. Unfortunately, when you've got 10 or so AUTO programs and a full battery of desk accessories, trying to track down a single culprit can be nearly impossible. Basically, you get to spend a couple of evenings rebooting your computer over and over, adding and subtracting software until you can reliably crash your computer. Sounds like fun, doesn't it?

Eventually, I managed to compile a list of the problems I could reliably reproduce. I also added in the problems I couldn't reproduce, but noted them as such. I E-Mailed this list to Darek via GEnie, and within a week or so I received another version of Quick ST II. This one fixed a few of the problems I encountered, and added a few new ones. The speed was better, and this one added a nice customizer program so that you could install a picture or custom fill pattern on the desktop. The customizer had a few strange glitches, but nothing fatal. I appreciated this.

I told Darek about the few bugs/glitches I discovered, and within three days had another version of Quick ST II in my electronic mail box. I spent three days doing everything I could possibly think of to crash the program. I couldn't. Oh, sure,

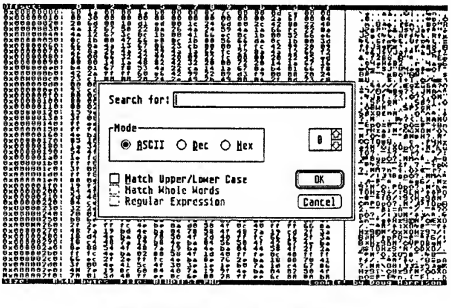


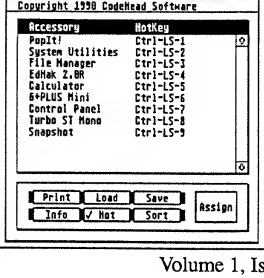
I managed to crash almost all of my software, but as far as I can tell, it was the software's fault, not Quick ST II. Within a few days, the commercial version of Quick ST II was released to the public.

Now, there are some advantages and disadvantages to being a beta-tester. The advantages are obvious—free software. However, you have to work hard for that "free" software, and you do risk such unpleasantness as a trashed hard disk. As most developers try to pick beta-testers based on unique systems, you stand a better chance of being a beta-tester if you have something other than just a stock ST with no "add-on" software (such as NeoDesk, UIS III, etc.). It also helps if the developer knows you exist. My shareware payment to Darek was my "foot in the door"—I never even had to ask to become a beta-tester. I hope that this has helped to give you an idea what beta-testing is all about. It is certainly exciting to watch a software package mature and improve. It is also tedious and tiring. If the idea of spending your free time playing "silicon detective" and sitting through endless re-boots sounds like your cup of tea, you might want to see if any companies are looking for beta-testers. As practically all ST developers use GEnie, odds are you'll need a modem and a GEnie membership if you seriously want to beta-test. It also helps if you have a large library of software that you know how to use well, as you'll have to use nearly every feature in each software package to insure that it is working properly. Beta-testing is a rare honor, but it is an honor that you have to work very hard for.

Coming Next Month:

LookIt! and PopIt! from CodeHead Software





The Electronic Slate
(The ST In Education)

by Bob Coulter

By way of introduction, I'm a 7th & 8th grade teacher at West Geauga Middle School located in Chesterland, Ohio. I have been teaching world geography and U.S. history for 25 years, and I really enjoyed working with the young children of the future.

In the past five years teaching has become a little easier and a lot more rewarding because of computers. Not only do I keep all my records, such as tests, lesson plans, inventory, & anything else that makes teaching a little easier on disk, I also use computers to help my students learn more about the world in which we live. The computers I have in my classroom are Atari ST's, one 520 ST & a 1040 ST.

When asked to write some educational articles concerning the ST and education for the N.O.A.H. Newsnotes I decided to give it a try. I have several topics that I'll present over a period of time and I hope that you enjoy them as much as I did in writing them.

INTRODUCTION

I have always felt that the ST could be winner in the field of education because of it's power, ease of use, versatility, and price. But, try to convince other educators of this and you will have one heck of a battle on your hands.

Since the ST is not an Apple II or an IBM Blue most schools will not even talk to you about purchasing anything else. And if you mention the Atari they will just look at you as they are thinking, "boy this guy is a real loony." Naturally they won't say this but you can bet that's what they are thinking. I'm sure the educator in them will say something nice and gentlemanly to you and that's the end of the conversation.

Now what I'm about to tell you really hurts, but as the expression goes, "the truth sometimes hurt " really fits the situation. Many teachers, and even administrators, are very narrow minded when it comes to computers and the classroom. They are afraid of new technology and the idea of learning a new system. They are comfortable with, let's say the Apple II, and since it can do what little that needs to be done, they are satisfied. Remember the old cigarette commercial that stated, "I'd rather fight than switch"? Well, that axiom also applies to this situation.

Unfortunately this is a very negative attitude. Teachers and administrators must remember that they are there for the students. If it's in the best interest of the students to upgrade the computer system from an 8-bit to a 16-bit machine, then they better bite the Apple and just do it. They must forget the fear of learning a new system and catch up with the outside world.

Once this decision is made then a school must decide which 16-bit system to incorporate. The choices would be the IBM, IBM clones, the Mac, the Amiga, or the ST. Because of the prices of the IBM's and Mac's, many schools can't afford to purchase a dozen or so systems, I know ours can't. If they could then most likely they would purchase said computers because of the so-called "industry standard". And really, let's face it, IBM's would be the best for all concerned simply because of it's omnipresence in the world today. As for the remaining choices the ST would find it difficult simply because of Atari's image and history.

Boy, wouldn't it be nice if Atari Corporation decided to promote the ST in America like it does in Europe? Sure would help in the field of education because the ST can provide a tremendous amount of knowledge and benefit for the students and teachers. With the help and support of Atari, and Atarian's, the barriers that have kept the ST out of education could begin to crumble, much like the Berlin Wall.

As of now there is very little support from Atari, maybe they'll change in the future. At least I hope so. That leaves it up to us, the Atarian's, and just what can we do? One possible solution is to inform and show the schools the power, versatility, and price of the ST. Anyway you can, show the ST. And if you think that it's not worth it, boy are you wrong. In my next article I will tell you just how wrong you can be.

Hero's Quest I: So You Want to Be a Hero?

by Sierra

Review by Paul Johnson

So you want to be a hero?
Do you like D&D style adventures?

If you answered yes to either question, then here's a game you'll be sure to enjoy. It's called Hero's Quest I—So You Want To Be A Hero. This is a new 3-D animated fantasy role-playing game from SIERRA.

The object of this game is to be named Hero of Spielburg. First you must select between three character types—a fighter, a magician, and a thief. All three go about solving their quests differently. The fighter will rely on his brute strength and his weapons. The magician will use his aquired spells and tricks to complete his quest. And the thief will use his stealth and agility as his way of completing the quest. After you choose your hero, you must then assign his skill points. You are given skill points which pertain to the character class you chose. These are distributed to your Strength, Intelligence, Agility, Vitality, and luck. Then you have an additional 50 points which must be placed among a variety of other skills. These are Parry, Dodge, Stealth, Throwing, Climbing, Magic, and Pick Locks. A minimum of 5 points is required in a skill at the start, if you wish to increase in that particular skill. All these abilities and skills affect the game in one way or another, so it's best to make sure there is at least 5 points for each skill. Each skill will then increase with practice. The ones you use more will improve more rapidly then the others.

Hero's Quest is filled with more animation sequences than past SIERRA games. Which makes it even more enjoyable to watch and play. One of my favorites is the thief's STEALTH command, in which he sneaks around on his tippy toes. There are plenty of monsters to see and fight, or run from if you can. One unique feature is the animated combat sequences. Hero's Quest actually puts you face to face with each monster as you engage in battle. A few of the monsters are Goblins, Kobolds, Trolls, Dragons, Ogres, Spectres and your everyday Grizzly Bear.

Along your journey you will have to make friends with all sorts of creatures from human to the unexplainable. They all tend to be powerful, so use caution when you approach them. There are plenty of puzzles which you must solve to complete the game. Some clues for these are gained by people you will meet in the game, for a price. So you will need plenty of gold and silver to obtain these clues. Money can be collected in a variety of ways. You can search your victim's dead bodies for loot or you can simply get it the old fashioned way...work for it. That's just a couple of the ways you'll get it.

Hero's Quest comes on four double-sided disk and is not copy-protected so you may install it on your hard drive. I recommend a hard drive because, like all SIERRA games the disk access for new screens is painfully slow. If you like the D&D style games, this one will be a definite asset to your collection. Believe me you will enjoy this one by yourself or with a friend to help you. The animation sequences alone are worth seeing. There was one sequence I didn't particularly care for because it seemed to have no place belonging in the game. This was over in the waterfall area, a periscope popped up and disappeared. Why this was in the game we'll never know.

New Laser Printer

The SLM605 is Atari's newest laser printer. The new laser is similar to the SLM804 only in the fact that it is also a "dumb" printer, using the ST's on-board memory instead of having its own. The SLM605 is slightly smaller, slower (6 pages per minute instead of 8 pages per minute for the SLM804), and most likely will be cheaper than its older brother.

New IBM-AT Emulators

Seems that there is not just one, but two new AT-class emulators coming out soon for the ST. The first emulator is AT Speed, the successor to PC Speed, which is produced by Sack in Germany and sold in the United States by Michtron. The other emulator is called AT Once, and is produced by a German newcomer to the ST emulator field, Vortex. Both are solder-in units. No word yet on how well these emulators perform, or when they will be avaliable here in the US. As always, we'll try and keep you posted.

Atari and Kenan

Looks like Atari US's new president, Elie Kenan, resigned from Atari on October 12th. Distance from his family in France was the reason stated. Those who had met the man were optimistic that he would be able to turn things around for Atari here in the States. The sudden resignation was shocking, and morale at Atari is said to be at an all-time low.

Mug Shot Woes

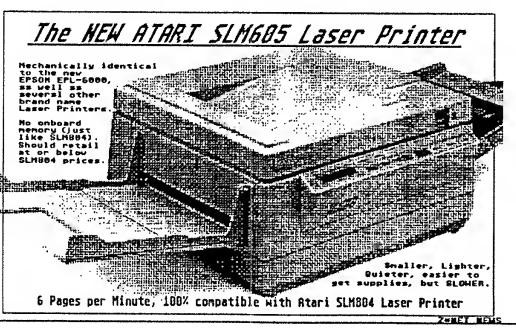
The eagerly awaited Mug Shot program, from WizWorks, has started shipping. However, it seems the version currently being shipped is more or less a beta version, not the finished product. Perhaps it was the pressures of trying to ship on time, perhaps just bad luck. No word yet on when the final version will be ready.

CodeKeys from CodeHead

CodeHead Software has announced a new system-macro program, called CodeKeys. This program will allow you to record any keyboard and mouse actions (such as loading a program) and save them as a macro, which can later be replayed. An editor is included to modify or streamline macros.

Avant Garde Gone?

Yes, it seems that the PC Ditto II disaster has claimed the business life of Avant Garde systems. The company has disconnected their phone lines and vacated their business address. This most likely means that current PC Ditto II owners will never see the EGA driver software that was promised as a free upgrade for the unit.



Rumor Mill

NeoDesk III Delayed?

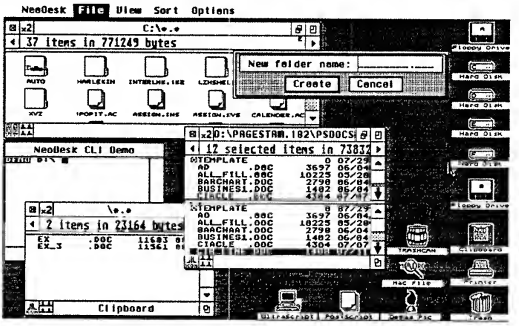
NeoDesk III was announced last month, but still hasn't been shipped. This new version of the popular GEM desktop replacement is supposed to include a whole host of nifty new features, such as batch files, a file clipboard, split windows, custom fonts, and much more. No announcement has been made about the delay.

Supercharger 1.4

In the midst of new challengers and old corpses, the reigning champ of PC emulation on the ST keeps going strong. Talon has announced a new version of the Supercharger software, version 1.4, that adds an impressive number of new features. The most interesting is the ability to multitask ST and IBM programs simultaneously. The Supercharger software can run as a desk accessory, which is how many of the miracles are possible. Talon has also announced a new program, called TC Power, which allows you to use the ST's RAM as expanded memory while in IBM emulation.

LDW Power 2.0?

One of the most popular spreadsheets for the ST, LDW Power, may be slated for an upgrade. A user calling the company was told by the receptionist that a new version was due soon. No details were given on what improvements were made, but one hopes that full 1-2-3 compatibility is included.



Flash 2.0

A new version of Flash may be close to completion. While Antic Software has all but abandoned the ST market, it seems they may indeed be working on a new version of this popular communications program. No word on when the new version might be available, but they have been working on version 2.0 for well over a year now.

Gone in a Flash?

Speaking of "Flash," let's not forget the new CBS show that has that name. It was supposed to feature ST computers as product placement ads. If you haven't seen the show yet, let's just say that the rumors of ST product placement seem to be unfounded. The premier and first episode were totally ST-free, opting instead to feature old IBM's and DEC terminals. If you want to see an ST on TV, your best bet is to catch an episode of "Growing Pains" on ABC. Of course, that may be a high price to pay for a video glimpse of an ST...

TT OOPS!

Seems that our rumor of the TT being a true 32Mhz machine may have been a bit optimistic. Current statements from Atari state that the current versions of the TT have a 32Mhz CPU within a 16Mhz system. No word yet on whether the "Tower" configuration will be built to a true 32Mhz configuration, however.

CD-ROM Confusion

Seems there are a lot of conflicting stories floating around concerning the fate of Atari's CDAR-504 CD-ROM drive. There is a rumor that the drive will *never* be released in the United States, while there are other reports that Atari has already shipped the units to US developers, along with special driver software that can be used with *any* SCSI CD-ROM drive. Best bet is that Atari is delaying the US release of the CD-ROM drive until European and US developers have created some viable applications that take advantage of this long-awaited new peripheral.

PUZZLE BREAK

(Solution in next month's N.O.A.H. Newsnotes!)

Atari ST Software

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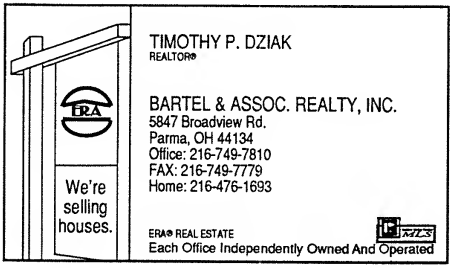
XENON2ESLTCEFREPDROWHQDVT
HSQJBBGZDUNGEONMASTERTVZR
JDBBAASULPDROWTS1KMKFLKRE
CNHJETCYNCJFGIJRETIRWDROW
YERIXTALFUWARDYSAETXUQILW
BOTHZLDKCABSEKIRTSSOAHCDJ
EDOJTE3HQXHTRCGERTCEPSRWV
REUZKCDLNOCLAFIKOEXMUJOPI
PSCKRHTEIKIDACANYDGBSKLOH
AKHNTELMEOMGODCISABAFGZWX
IAUTTSOBRUTTPIRCSARTLUQEE
NVPBBSRMRHXERIWTOHQITPGRD
TPCDITTOXXX215MURTCEPSHCY
XXVHETILESAGEDTSOTSUMALAC
IVKSEDITLUMAERTSEGAPEEMJX
```

Word List

1ST WORD PLUS	EASYDRAW	SPECTRE GCR
BATTLE CHESS	FALCON	SPECTRUM 512
CAD 3D	GFA BASIC	STOS
CALAMUS	HOTWIRE	TOUCHUP
CHAOS STRIKES BACK	LDW POWER	TURBO ST
CYBERPAINT	MULTIDESK	ULTRASCRIPT
DEGAS ELITE	NEODESK	WORDPERFECT
DUNGEON MASTER	PAGESTREAM	WORDWRITER
DYNACAD	PCDITTO	XENON2



Atari Hardware Solution

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   TS025                 1
ROTALSNART IDIM ZTOH  0
              ETS04014
                     0
             XNYL   S
TRANSPUTER WORKSTATION
                  F  S O
                 M  H MI
S                  2  EL
L                 0   GO
MROTINOM MRETINOM4    AFS
8   SOT WOBNIAR        TT
0 030TT    EVIRD MOR DCRA
4                     OC
MEGAFILE 30    ESUOM   PY
```

EASY ACCESS CATALOG

A Treasure at the Cuyahoga County Public Library

by John Dernar

```
WELCOME TO THE CUYAHOGA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
EASY ACCESS CATALOG

*** MAIN MENU ***

If you are having problems with screen scrolling please see item 5!

1. Search the catalog & Place Reserves

2. How to use the catalog: Searching, Limiting searches, Placing Reserves

3. Directory of Cuyahoga County Library branches & hours of operation

4. Guide to borrowing & loan policies

5. System Requirements / Availability / Help

6. Exit program

-- Make choice and press RETURN -------------------- END to exit program --

NUMBER? 1_
```

More than 2 million library books, records, videos, and audio titles can be searched and reseved on the EASY ACCESS CATALOG (EAC) using your home computer and modem.

The catalog is part of the Cuyahoga County Public Library's (CCPL) on line circulation system. It places the CCPL's entire inventory of its 29 branch libraries at your disposal.

Various search methods are available to help find just the "right" library item. County residents can then reserve items by typing in their library card number and specifying the branch where they would like to pick up their selections.

The system originally went into service at the branch libraries in mid 1988. It eventually replaced the manual card catalogs at all the locations. Dial-up from home computer started in December 1988, and the ability to place reserves was implemented throughout the county in February 1989.

The EAC system runs on three DEC VAX 8650 computers. There are 240 terminals at the branches for public use and another 300 terminals for circulation and staff use. Currently there are 10 incoming phone lines for dial-up service.

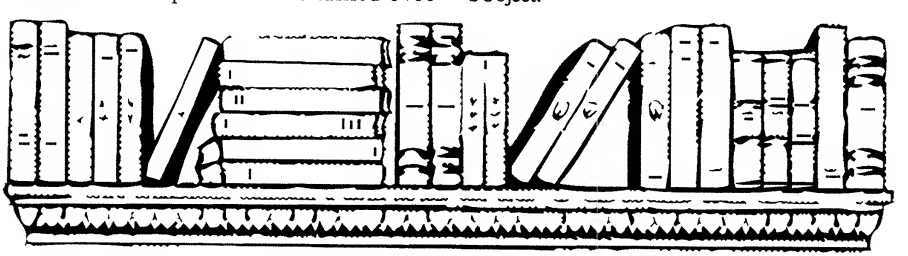
During 1989 there were more than 67,000 dial up calls logged with over 32,000 reserves placed. The month of September 1990 tallied 6460 dial-up calls. And the week of October 8,1990 had 6775 individual searches made by dial-up.

Now for a quick guided tour of the EAC. Communication settings of 1200,8,N,1,F, work just fine. The 24 hour phone number is (216) 398-8806. Upon line connection the usual couple of carriage returns will bring up the "WELCOME" screen and "MAIN MENU" with its 6 possible choices.

The first choice allows you to "SEARCH THE CATALOG AND PLACE RESERVES". The others offer various instructions and outline library policies. After selecting #1, a new menu "SEARCH THE CATALOG" appears. It first lists all of the branches and then asks for the initials of the branch to be displayed first while searching. Next it asks if your equipment is VT100 compatible or not. Although many ST terminal programs can emulate VT100, responding with a "N" seems to run a slightly different and faster program.

From here on, the screens are all divided into the same three parts. The top of the screen displays the choice you have made. The middle shows the results of your choice. And the bottom informs you of your next possible choices.

The catalog can be searched four ways: AUthor, TItle, Author and Title (AT), and SUbject.



Typing in SU=ATARI yields 22 headings, of which many have multiple titles listed. Selecting heading #1 (ATARI 1040ST) which has only one title in it, brings up a "COPY DISPLAY" of information about a book "The Essential Atari 520ST & 1040ST User's Guide". We are informed as to author, publisher, date, and other pertinent statistics.

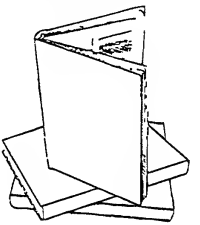
Two branches have a copy of the book. One copy is "SEE SHELF" and the other one is "ON LOAN". More choices are now presented, including, "FULL DISPLAY" which gives even more details about the book and "RESERVE OPTION" which allows a hold to be placed on the book.

Typing an "H" and entering a 10 digit library card number, along with a branch code for pick-up and last date needed, is all that is required to enter the hold.

Assuming that the book is on the shelf at one of the library locations, it usually takes about a week for the information to be dispatched to the appropriate branch, for the book to be physically located and sent to the pick-up branch, and for someone to notify you by phone that your order has arrived. At this point you will have three days to claim your goods. If on the other hand, your choice is on loan or there are reserves out standing, then there is no way to predict how long the process might take. ST material usually takes about a week, but a popular video cassette often takes months.

The EASY ACCESS CATALOG system is fantastic. It can save a lot of time at the library, is easy to use, and the price is right. There are no on-line charges or fees for processing hold requests. Explore it and enjoy it—and happy searching!

A Final Note: Thanks to Mark J. Dober, manager of library systems, for many of the facts and figures.



N.O.A.H. Membership Registration Form

Date: / / **Administrative Use Only** **Membership #:** _____

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
State: _____
Zip Code: _____

Phone: ( ) -

Computers Owned: _____

_____

Check One:

- ❑ One Year Membership w/Monthly Newsletter ($18.oo)
- ❑ One Year Membership w/Monthly Newsletter & Disk ($24.oo)

Either membership also automatically registers you on ST NERD BBS, a N.O.A.H. & PPP support board, and gets you a 10% discount on most ST Software at A A A Video Repair & Computers !

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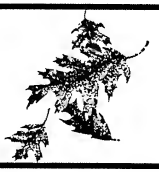
Northern Ohio Atari Helpers



November 1990

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	21 Thanksgiving	23	24
25	26	27	28	29 N.O.A.H. Meeting at AAA Video 7:00 PM	30	

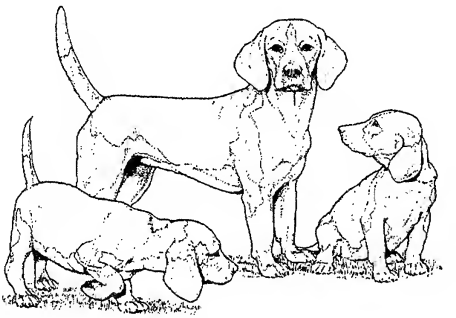
ELECTRIC BEACH
Computer Products

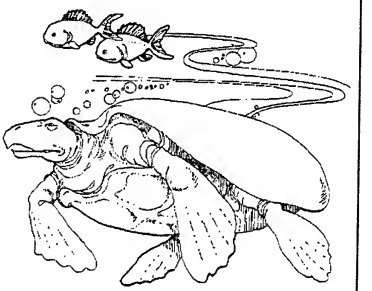
Coloring Book Clip Art

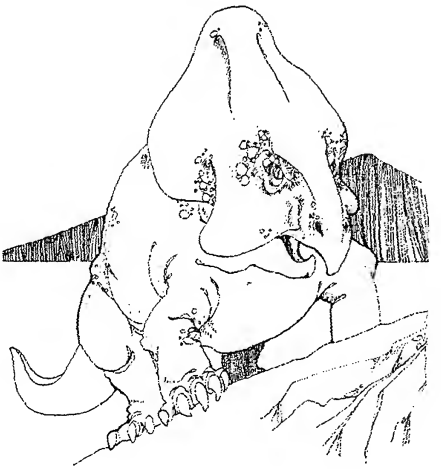
Volumes 1 thru 4

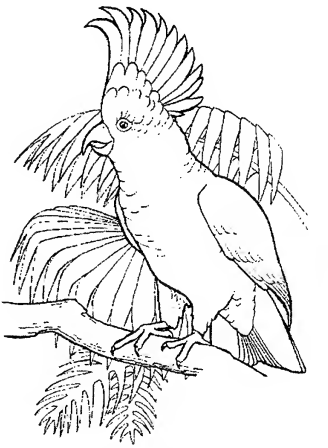
Mac & ST
Formats Available

$12.95









A Division Of: AAA Video Repair & Computers

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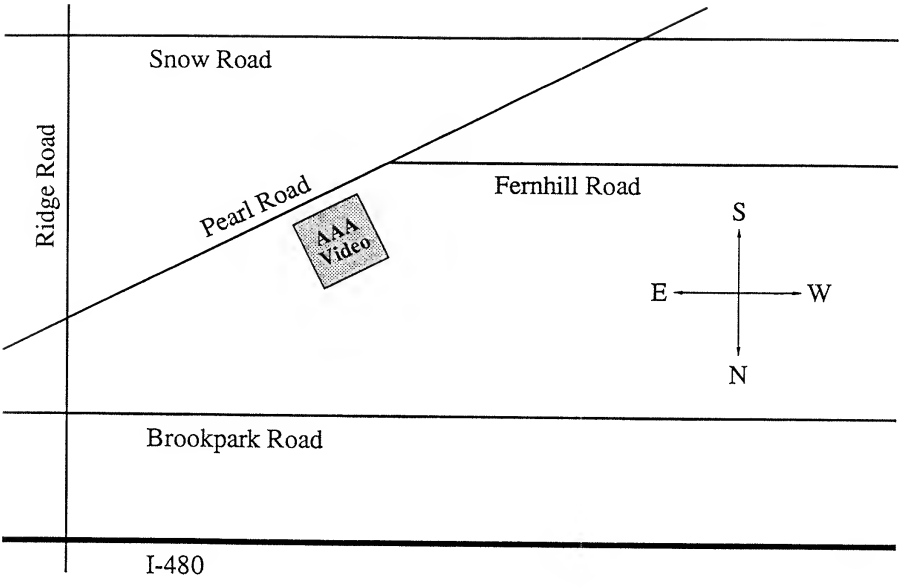

N.O.A.H. Newsnotes
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Parma, Ohio 44129
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